THE LEARNED PIG

1786

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With Notes, Critical and Explanatory, and Illustrations from Bozzy, Piozzi &c. &c.

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Anecdotes of the Learned Pig, with Notes, critical and explanatory, and Illustrations, By James Boswell, 1740–1795 and Hester Lynch Piozzi, 1741–1821.

ANECDOTES

OF THE

LEARNED PIG.

WITH

NOTES,

CRITICAL AND EXPLANATORY,

AND

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM BOZZY, PIOZZI, &c. &c.

Epicuri de grege porcus.

LONDON:
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M,DCC,LXXXVI.

ADVERTISEMENT.

 $\mathsf{T}\,\mathsf{H}\,\mathsf{E}\,$ Editor is indebted to mere accident for his acquaintance with the following ſprightly performance; and, as it ſeemed to have been the Author's intention to have written notes, from ſeveral detached papers having reference to the text, the Editor has taken the liberty to introduce them as ſuch, and add ſome trifling references by way of proof or illuſtration, which he hopes may not be deemed impertinent.

May 12, 1786.

ANECDOTES

OF THE

LEARNED PIG *.

 THE great and learned Pig, of which it is our hap to (peak, was produced in a (ty belonging to an old Tory, [$\mathsf{6}$] book(eller, in † Moorfields. At that time Moorfields was diftinguished by rails which ‡ fluttered with party writings and libels of every fort; and it is remarkable that his mother, during her pregnancy, tore down from those rails, and fairly devoured one whole volume of Filmer and all Sacheverell's fermons at a meal; after which the was observed to grunt more and louder, and to lie longer in the fun, and deeper in the mire, than it had before been her cuftom to do. She was delivered of our Pig on the morning of the tenth of June. He was strong and bony, but of an inelegant form, and betrayed a very uncommon roughness in his squeak; and it was foon after remarked by the neighbours, that his [7] trottings after his mother were made in § zig-zags, and not in ftraight lines as is ufual with other pigs. After his mother, however, he refolutely trotted, and one morning, as ill fortune would have it, into a garden which had belonged to the great Milton, and was now in the pollellion of one of his daughters. Here he fed voracioully upon white roles, whilft his lady mother was bufily employed in rooting up all the red ones. He was in this place leized by the owner, and fo feverely whipped, that he thought no other than that fhe was whipping him to death in preparation for a luxurious meal. Of this whipping he retained through life the highest resentment, and bore ever after the most inveterate hatred of the whole Miltonic line. On the fifth of November following he was taken up, without any warrant, by the rabble, for the uses of a Whig fealt, and was very near being roalted at the lame fire with the Pope, the Devil, and the Pretender; but this [8] being discovered to be something meally, he was turned loose to be cured, as they deridingly said, by the \$\display\$ royal touch. Of this event he retained the strongest sensibility, and considered ever after his fellow sufferers, the Pope and the Pretender, with great complacence, if not affection; but as to the other party, though exposed to the same dishonours, there was something in his horns and his tail which he could never be brought [9] to endure. The touch already mentioned, though profanely fneered at by the Whig rabble, was foon afterwards in good earnest applied; but so great an obliquity of head had by this time taken place, that it could never be perfectly reftored. Upon this memorable occasion there was placed about his neck a ribband of true blue, to which hung a filver coin, displaying royal lineaments of the Stuart line, making so strong an impression on his young fancy, that for that line he ever after retained the most # passionate regard. Thus decorated, he considered himself, and was confidered by others, as a kind of ♦ Tantony, or St. Anthony's Pig, belonging to the Crown. Not long after this period he was [10] heard one morning as he lay in the fun to grunt forth, portentoufly the following rhymes:

Gruntledum, gruntledum, gruntledum, íqueak, I hope very íoon to be able to ípeak;
Through my griftly proboícis, I find, that I can Already cry Ay like a Parliament man:
Like a maid I íqueak, like a lover can whine,
And ínort like an Alderman laden with wine.
Gruntledum, gruntledum, íqueak, I hope very íoon to be able to ípeak.

^{* &}quot;He was not at all offended, when, comparing all our acquaintance to fome animal or other, we pitched upon the elephant for his refemblance, adding, that the probofcis of that creature was like his mind most exactly, strong to buffet even the tyger, and pliable to pick up even the pin."—Piozzi, p. 205.—N.B. For elephant our author probably read pig.

- † We have fought for information concerning this fact, that the gentleman delignated in the text was born in *Moorfields*, or that his father was a bookleller there, which, however, we confels to have heard, but when or where we can by no means remember.
- Cloath ſpice, line trunks, or flutt'ring in a row, Befringe the rails of *Bedlam* or Soho.

POPE'S IM. OF HORACE, Ep. I. B. 2.

- § "When in company where he was not free, or when engaged earneftly in conversation, he never gave way to such habits, which proves that they were not involuntary." I still, however, think, that these gestures were involuntary; for surely had not that been the case, he would have restrained them in the public streets.— Boswell's Tour, p. 9.
- The pretence of a miraculous power in the cure of the evil was the moft extraordinary ftrain of that King-craft of which James the Firft fo loudly boafted. No manly man, under the circumftances of the cafe, would have fet up this pretence, or have expected any effect from it but that of public derifion and contempt; but weak and credulous men take, perhaps, the best measure of human weakness and credulity, and so deep did this fraud strike its roots, that, authenticated as it was by the clergy, and annually certified by the surgeons and physicians of the royal household, it survived the civil war, was reflored with Charles the Second, extended beyond the revolution, and was only extinguished by the act of settlement, which, taking the principles of the British government out of the clouds, placed them on the firm basis of the earth. The pretensions of Alexander were of a bolder and more rational fort, and held to be so important, that his successor, who had no kindred interest in the horns of Ammon, yet mingled them in their crowns and tiaras, till at last the Roman Titans tumbled from their seats one after another these fictitious gods. The most deceitful glimmer of divine claim seems to have had more influence on the mind of the person who seems to have been designated in the text, than the most solid principles of political right.
- # "I mentioned Lord Hailes as a man of anecdote—He was not pleafed with him for publifhing only fuch memorials as were unfavourable for the Stuart family."— Bofwell's Tour, p. 312.
- ◆ Tantony pigs were pigs who belonged formerly to the Convent of St. Anthony in the city. Collars were placed about their necks, infcribed St. Anthony. They fed all over the town, and out of refpect to the fathers of that convent, it was ufual for the pallengers to give them bifcuits, and other things carried for that purpole in their pockets. The pigs of courfe followed the pallengers in this expectation; and hence came the exprellion of one perfon's following another like a Tantony pig.

This being publicly known, the neighbours now put on him a human coat, in which condition he appeared as if the *Hog in armour* had defcended from his fign-poft to mingle in fociety, and converfe with man. Nor did they ftop here, but ventured also to recommend him for a pension to the great *ministerial hog*, though, for the present, however, without effect; for though it was evident enough that our learned Pig could say *Ay*, yet it did not follow that he would be [11] always disposed to do so. He was therefore turned loose into the soil of this great town to substitute as he could, where, *idling* and *rambling*, he picked up sometimes flowers, and sometimes thistles, a great number of Greek and Hebrew roots, with an immense quantity of verbage of every sort *. It is for his honour that he routed in this rich composit for years without giving any offence, except that, through resentment to the Miltonic line, he associated rather too long with a very obscene animal of the pig kind, called a † *Lauder*; and except, [12] that he was taken sometimes with strange freaks, and fancied [13] once that he saw something in the ‡ shape of a sound of a knocking; and excepting also his too sonorous gruntulations, and that long concatenation of soapy bubbles which [14] usually frothed from his mouth §. In the midst of these researches he had one morning the good fortune to throw up this sentiment in rhyme:

Say, what is a Tory? A Tory is he
Who thinks kicking fhould pass through every degree;
And that all political motion should go
From the toe to the bum, from the bum to the toe.
Then what is a \$\frac{1}{2}\$ Whig? A dog full of knavery,
A rascal, a scoundrel impatient of slavery, [15]
A malignant, a thief;—then tell me if Whig
Be any more better than gruntledum pig?

- * The perion here deligned is allowed by the courtely of the times to polies a nervous and elegant file; but so unhappy is the writer of this note, that he can by no means concur in the general praife. He has a notion of Saxon simplicity, from which all departure, not enforced by necessity, and regulated by taste, affimilating, as much as may be, foreign words to the genius of the Saxon tongue, is to him intolerable. But the writer here spoken of was wholly descient in taste, and appears to refer his English to some foreign standard chanting forth polysyllables, and tiring the ear with dull returns of the same cadences, for ever advancing like a post horse, two up and two down, and incapable of changing his pace, without throwing both himself and his rider in the dirt. But hack writers, like hack horses, find it for their ease to practise an uniform rate.
- † There is, fays a remarker on the life of Milton, a high degree of prepollent probability that the letter in the Gentleman's Magazine for the month of August 1747, page 363 and 364, ligned William Lauder, came from the amicable hand of the writer of that life. I do not, however, believe that the writer of Milton's life was in the fecret of Lauder's forgeries, the fact itself being of so extraordinary a nature, that it is not probable that any two persons, separately capable of committing it, should so fortuitously meet together; yet such was his malevolence towards Milton, that we must admit it to have greatly clouded his understanding. He undoubtedly wrote the preface and the possificript to Lauder's publication: in allusson to which, Doctor Douglas says, that 'tis hoped, nay 'tis expected, that the the elegant and nervous writer, whose judicious sentiments and inimitable style point out author of Lauder's preface and possificript, will no longer allow one to plume himself with his feathers, who appears so little to have deserved his assistance. Lauder confesses his guilt in a letter to Doctor Douglas, and takes all the obloquy on himself; but in a subsequent letter he declares, that the penitential one was written for him by that very gentleman, who has since written the life of Milton, and makes some complaints of a breach of friendship, in which he had placed the most implicit and unlimited confidence; but as he never charged, that I know of, the writer of Milton's life with any participation in the forgery, we impute to him nothing but a strange malignity which darkened his understanding. It must be owned, however, that he cut off the wreck of Lauder with great management, as well as competent success. I remember that he boasts in his life of Milton of his having written a prologue to the Comus of Milton, for the benefit of one of his grand daughters. This, I suppose, he would pass for his benevolence; but he must excuse me; I am not so much the dupe of charity as to believe, that he who so brutally calum

trace him in his line, would be moved by any charitable difpolition towards any defcendant of Milton's, as being fuch. The fact, I believe, is, that, finding Milton reduced by the labours of his friend Lauder to a level with his wifhes, he practifed, in concurrence with Mr. Lauder, one further act of malice, and endeavoured to fix an obligation on Milton in the perfon of his granddaughter, conferred by his most inveterate foes as the effect of fatiated vengeance, converted into mingled pity and contempt. If there is any harfhness in this note, let it be remembered, that it speaks of a man who, in the instance mentioned, let loose the most outrageous malignity against one, who, whatever political errors he might have imbibed in common with a great majority of the nation, was, however, as a private man, of so exemplary a virtue, as to do the highest honour to literary pursuit, and whose genius, as a poet, conferred celebrity on the nation itself, and in whose protection therefore we ought to have taken a greater share.

- The hiftory of this knocking is curious; it forms fuch a drama of comedy, tragedy, and farce, from its first commencement in Cock Lane, passing through the solemn vaults of Clerkenwell, and then to Weltminster Hall, as, I believe, never was exhibited in any other country; a drama wherein childisness and age, gravity, dignities, folly, fraud, superstition, and credulity, were all largely and confusedly thrown in to thicken the plot. That the person here designated should carry out of this scene any respectability of character, is a proof that either he must have possessed to be the test of merit, if any base metal can in this manner pass current for gold.
- § Our biographer (hould have told us alfo, that once he joined the train of fancy, and pa(fing the limits of fact, entered by the Shake(pearean gate into fairy land. But in an evil hour, "No favouring Sybil marked the devious way." Never was man or pig fo altounded! and no wonder. He had ftumbled unaccountably on the creations of fen(fibility, and found no corresponding emotions within; yet, unconfcious of defect, he pretended a knowledge of the country, and even offered himfelf as an unerring guide; but not long; for, tired with the maze, he gave way, at length, to new adventurers, and fled as another Gulliver out of Lilliput, where he had only encumbered the land.
- "No man, however, was more jealoufly attached to his party; he not only loved a man the better, if he hated a Whig. Dear Bathurft, faid he to me one day, was a man to my very heart's content; he hated a fool, and he hated a rogue, and he hated a Whig; he was a very good hater."—Piozzi's Memoirs, p. 83. "Pulteney was as pattry a fellow as could be. He was a Whig, who pretended to be honeft; and you know it is ridiculous for a Whig to pretend to be honeft."

Talking of Granger—"The dog is a Whig: I do not like much to fee a Whig in any drefs; but I hate to fee a Whig in a parfon's gown."—Ibid. p. 312.

There needed no more; a pension was immediately hung about his neck, and the letters L. L. D. soon afterwards impressed on his rump *. And now who but our Pig? lying in the fun, cheek by jowl, by the great ministerial Hog, routing in the political soil, and throwing up daily the most delicious [16] pig-nuts with his snout; nor did these discoveries rest wholly in himself; for the great Hog would fometimes let fall, from behind, certain rich, but often crude and ill-digefted, materials, which were taken up in the Westphalian mode by our Pig, and delivered again better concocted to the many-headed beast: and hence we were taught, that Taxation was no Tyranny, and that a good American war was a very commodious and falutary thing. Great applaufe enfued, but not unattended with envy, there being at the time many fnarlers who have faid, and now fay, that it were better if our Pig had been, before this period, well foufed in the pickling tub, and that even the great ministerial Hog himself had been hung up for bacon. I decide nothing on these brawls; yet, having respect to a certain supposed dignity in our Pig, it may, perhaps, excite some wonder, that he, whose politics were of no older a date than his pension, and who had hitherto never routed out of the moral track, should all at once lend himself out in this manner, and make his conscience responsible for measures, of the principles or effects of which he must have been so incompetent a judge. But I answer in few words, that, like all other [17] politicians, he had his propenlities; that it was, perhaps, the nature of the animal, and that mingling his humours and his reason together, there might have been a competent sincerity in the case. But what shall we say to the indecency of his turning up the graves of *Pope* and † *Swift*, (for I [peak not now of Milton) and goring them, Tories as they were, with fo malicious a tooth? I answer, first, that they were not Tories. Pope placed his glory in moderation; and Swift was the renegade of one party, without being the convert of the other. But it was not Whig or Tory, I believe, which now moved our Pig: there are other inftinctive enmities in the world. These men of real genius were satirists by profession, and the natural enemies of Pigs —"The fewer ftill I name," fays Pope, "I hurt the more."—"Bond is but one, but Balaam is a fcore;" and again, "An hundred fmart in Timon and in Balaam." And I believe that our Pig fmarted in Bentley, Tibbald, and poffibly in many others; the ftorm [18] had but just patted before him, and he heard the arrowy shower still rattle in his ear, and was conscious, perhaps, that had he come forth a day fooner, he would have been placed in a diftinguifhed, but, to him, a very unpleafant, niche in the Dunciad of Pope,

"Sacred to ridicule his whole life long, "And the lad burden of lome merry long."

- * Our author daſhes away from thing to thing with very little method or order. He might, however, have touched on the occupation of a ſchoolmaſter, ſo honourable for a pig; in proof of which, we could have furniſhed him with the following document:
 - "At Edial, near Litchfield, in Stafford/inire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek languages by Samuel Johnfon."

ADVERTISEMENT IN THE GENT. MAG. 1736, p. 428.

† "He feemed to me to have an unaccountable prejudice against Swift; for I once took the liberty to ask him, if Swift had personally offended him; and he told me, he had not."—Boswell's Tour, p. 38.

Where he infults therefore the mighty dead, his rage is at leaft natural; and when, to wound *Pope*, he fuborns the tongue of a * kitchen wench, he preferves, however, a nice proportion between his end and his means, doing, with very fingular propriety, the bafeft thing in, what muft be allowed to be, the lowest way. But we abstain, we affect not gravity, we even forget

his almost felonious attack upon Milton, and proceed. We have already noted the facility with which [19] our learned Pig could fay Ay. It was a great accomplifhment; but he had also his defects. † No art, no instruction could ever bring him to make a tolerable bow, or indeed to practice any civil grimace whatever; and his higheft approach, in this way, towards humanity, never went farther than to entitle him, from the most exquisite judge, to the character of a very respectable Hottentot: and hence he became at last to be considered as a very great ‡ Bore; under [20] which disgrace he retired to a brewery in the Borough.—Happy retirement! for here he was fed with the freshest grains by the fair hand of a lady, who condescended to become the prieftefs of our Pig; a lady who had acquired the Greek language without lofing her own, and whose manners and latinity were both equally pure. How great therefore must have been his grief, when he afterwards saw his fair provider melt away into the arms of a loft, but doubtles linewy Signor, and bathe herself, as it is yet her fortune to do, in the voluptuous warmths of Italy. But her's, however be the praife, that, composed of gentle passions, she conscientiously facrificed, at thirty-eight, fortune, freedom, and England, only to legalize her delights. Never in any future period may fhe be repentant of her choice, but always find in the joys of [21] harmony a compeniation for the decays of love. From the fair hand of this lady our Pig was not only fed with the fineft grains, but with the choiceft green peas also, the earlieft of the year-delicious food, as he himself confess—for a § Pig. By her too was prepared for him the most inviting draff, which he swilled up at all hours with huge avidity and delight. But the lady had her humours; the grew tired of one thing, and fond of another; the fought, upon preffing inducements, the great rendezvous of Bath; and so the joys of the brewery had an end. Many were of opinion, (for who can pleafe all,) that a certain diftillery in the neighbourhood would have been a more apt and proper retreat for our Pig;—but there were difficulties; I enter not into domestic affairs; but whether there was any whiggism, or rivalship, or jealousy, or what else in the cafe, I know not; but certain it [22] is, that Sir Joseph and he could never, as they ought, well pig together. During the happy period above mentioned, it came into the fancy of our Pig to journey into Scotland in the character of a travelling bear, with a ragged (taff in his paws, and a ◊ monkey on his back. When he firft obtained a pen(ion, he had been very affectionately confidered by the people of that country, and in a manner naturalized, and become one of them; but he discovered soon afterwards, and more particularly on this occasion, so much of the badger in his disposition, that they found great reason to complain of the strength and harshness of his jaw. On his return he resorted again to his beloved brewery, as yet profuse of grains and draff, where he grunted forth, as was his cuftom, many ftrange and fingular things, faithfully now on record, pretending also to cure certain mental diseases by the medicinal qualities of his tongue; but its extreme roughness the sensibility of his patients could not bear. Enough has been faid; the reft fhall [23] be left to Bozzy. Yet we will add, that with all his peculiarities, he had virtues and merits enough to make us heartily wifh he were ftill in being:-But, alas, it is paft, and he is now cutting up into junks, to be fold pro bono publico at nine different shops in retail.

- * Most of what can be told concerning his petty peculiarities was communicated by a female domestic of the Earl of Oxford, who knew him, perhaps, after the middle of life.—Johnson's Lives of the Poets, 8vo. vol. 4, p. 141.
- † And yet certain it is that no pains was [pared for this purpofe; for "my mother ([aid he) was always telling me that I did not behave my[elf; that I [hould endeavour to learn behaviour, and [uch cant." Indeed his defect in this particular could not be overlooked by his mo[t partial admirer; for "I [uppofe none ([ays [he) who [aw his odd manner of gefticulation, much blamed or wondered at the good lady's [olicitude concerning her [on's behaviour."—Piozzi's Memoirs of John[on, p. 24 and 25.
- ‡ Cant words are ufually begot in a cellar by fun upon folly: but the word bore and boar has another origin; it was begot on a fofa by Madamoifelle Ennui upon herfelf, and brought forth into the world in the midft of the ton. The roar and fury of the river Severn the people of the country call the boar. A female faint was reported miraculoully to have fleet lears: the fact was denied by a Madrid carpenter who had made the faint, "becaufe (fays he) fine is not only composed of heart of oak, but if fine had been at all disposed to weep, fine must have wept when I bored an aperture with my largest augre in her rump." And thus teazing and vexation of every kind may be called a bore. A dun is a bore, and a fermon is a bore, and fo forth; but the greatest of all possible bores, in whatever spelling, is a husband, a bore at night, a bore in the morning, and, in fhort, one general universal bore. Our author has used this fashionable word with the most perfect propriety, in a sense fatisfying the very letter, as well as spirit of the word.
- When we went into Wales together, and ſpent ſome time at Sir Robert Cotton's at Llewenney, one day at dinner I meant to pleaſe Mr. Johnſon particularly with a diſn of very young peas.—"Are not they charming?" ſaid I to him, while he was eating them.—"Perhaps (ſaid he) they would be ſo—to a Pig."—Piozzi, p. 63.
- ♦ This paffage feems inexplicable. We have had refort to Bozz, but in vain: the ftaff, indeed, he readily acknowledged; but as to the other affociate, or who, or what was meant, neither he nor we were able to difcover.

TRANSCRIBER'S NOTE

Original page numbers are shown like this: [24].

Footnotes have been resequenced and moved from within paragraphs to natural breaks in paragraphs. We would ordinarily have moved the footnotes to the end of the book, but we did not wish to entirely deprive you of the ambience that readers of the original printed book enjoyed.

Original printed spelling and grammar are retained, with one exception:

Page 3. "refeences" changed to "references".

END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK ANECDOTES OF THE LEARNED PIG

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